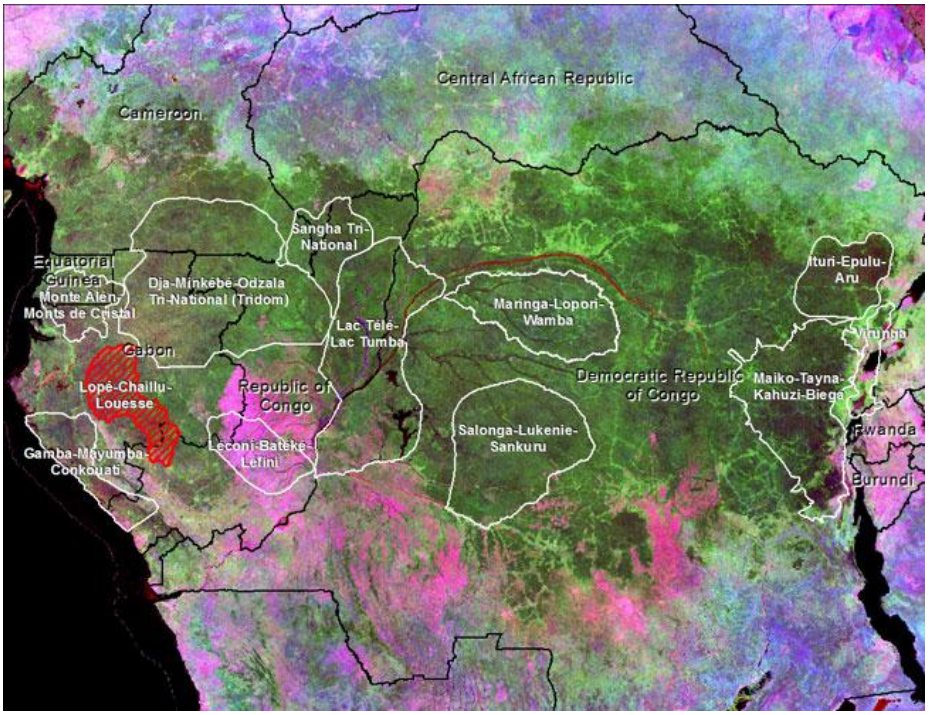
USAID/Central Africa Regional

Central Africa Regional Program for the Environment (CARPE)

Regional Development Cooperation Strategy

2012-2020



Accelerating Central Africa's transition to climate-resilient, low emissions development through sustainable management of biodiverse forests

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ACRONYM LIST

AAAS:	American Association for Advancement of Science
ADB:	African Development Bank
AFD	*Agence Française de Développement*
CAR:	Central Africa Regional
CARPE:	Central Africa Regional Program for the Environment
CAWHEI:	Central African World Heritage Forest Initiative
CBFP:	Congo Basin Forest Partnership
CBJ:	Congressional Budget Justification
CBNRM:	Community-Based Natural Resource Management
CCI:	Climate Change Initiative
CIDA:	Canadian International Development Agency
COMIFAC:	*Commission des Forêts d'Afrique Centrale* (Central African Forests Commission)
COP:	Conference of the Parties
CSR:	Corporate social responsibility
DFID (UK):	Department for International Development (United Kingdom)
DGIS:	Netherland Directorate General for International Cooperation
DO:	Development Objective
DRC:	Democratic Republic of Congo
ECOFAC:	*Ecosystèmes Forestiers d'Afrique Centrale*
EPT:	Epidemic Pandemic Threats
FAO:	Food and Agriculture Organization
FFEM:	*Fonds Français pour l'Environnement Mondial*
FIP:	Forest Investment Program
FLEGT:	Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade
FY:	Fiscal Year
GCC:	Global Climate Change
GDP:	Gross Domestic Product
GEF:	Global Environment Facility
GHG:	Greenhouse Gas
GIS:	Geographic Information System
GIZ:	German Society for International Cooperation
ICASS:	International Cooperative Administrative Support
IPCC:	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IR:	Intermediate Results
ITTO:	International Tropical Timber Organization
IUCN:	International Union for Conservation of Nature
JICA:	Japan International Cooperation Agency
LEDS:	Low Emission Development Strategy
LES:	Locally Employed Staff
M&E:	Monitoring and Evaluation
MRV:	Measurement, Reporting and Verification

NASA:	National Agency for Space and Aeronautics
NGO:	Non-Governmental Organization
NRM:	Natural Resources Management
OSFAC:	*Observatoire des Forêts d'Afrique Centrale* (Central Africa Forest Satellite Observatory)
OU:	Operating Unit
PMP:	Performance Management Plan
RDCS:	Regional Development Cooperation Strategy
REDD:	Reduction of Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
REDD+:	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation, plus conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks
REIMP:	Regional Environmental Information Management Program
TRIDOM:	Tri-National Dja-Odzala-Minkebe
UCLA:	University of California, Los Angeles
UN:	United Nations
UNEP:	United Nations Environment Program
UNESCO:	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFCCC:	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
USDA:	United States Department of Agriculture
US	United States
USAID:	United States Agency for International Development
USDH:	United States Direct Hire
USFS:	United States Forest Service
USFWS:	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
USGS:	United States Geological Survey
USG:	United States Government

Regional Development Cooperation Strategy

USAID/Central Africa Regional Program

2012-2020

I. Development Challenges and Opportunities

Context

More than 80 million people depend on Central Africa's rich forests and associated natural resources for their livelihoods. In addition to satisfying these immediate needs, the forest ecosystem provides services such as global climate regulation and a reservoir for unique and globally important biodiversity resources. However, despite the richness of the Congo Basin, the people of the Basin are among the poorest in Africa. The challenge facing regional governments, the global community and citizens of the Congo Basin alike is to strike a balance in the management of these natural resources to satisfy current needs while protecting and conserving the resource base for future generations. The prospect of new and emerging financing through partnerships opens a new avenue to sustain the ecological integrity of the Congo Basin.

The Central Africa Regional Program was established as a unique USAID/Central Africa Regional Operating Unit (OU) in 2003 to ensure unambiguous visible support for the USG commitment to the Congo Basin Forest Partnership (CBFP), an initiative announced at the International Summit for Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, South Africa in 2002. USAID then greatly expanded the Central Africa Regional Program for the Environment (CARPE) as the OU's sole program to provide significant new financial and technical resources to this international initiative to conserve the planet's second largest tropical rainforest and its threatened biodiversity. CARPE has assembled a large network of implementing partners including a large number of international conservation NGOs and federal agencies which count among them the Department of Interior (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service, U.S. Geological Service), the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (U.S. Forest Service, Foreign Agricultural Service).

The CARPE Strategic Plan set forth an ambitious set of objectives for the period 2003-2011. A mid-term evaluation in 2005-06 allowed USAID to consolidate and refine program activities and tactics while an External Evaluation completed in 2011 assessed progress against the stated goals and objectives. Among other findings, the External Evaluation concluded that CARPE had been extraordinarily successful in introducing large-scale ecosystem management approaches through the "landscape program" and recommended that CARPE should be refined and continued through 2020 with greater focus on policy reform to support sustainable forest management systems and to more directly support local communities' clear access rights to forest resources and associated ecosystems services payments. The evaluation report recommended that a third phase be designed by USAID to

consolidate and capitalize on the substantial investments and achievements. The report defined a series of steps USAID could take to more explicitly incorporate and support the evolving Global Climate Change policies surrounding the Reduction of Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation plus conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks (REDD+).

A great deal has been accomplished since the launching of the CBFP. A massive landscape management system has been introduced which is improving the management of over 50 million hectares of fragile and highly sensitive tropical forest throughout seven Central African countries. Tens of thousands of individuals have been trained from government, local and international NGOs and communities in a variety of conservation methods and techniques. USAID through CARPE has created a system to measure, track and verify deforestation through satellite remote sensing, and has "stood up" a regional African organization based in Kinshasa, DRC which is capable of analyzing satellite remote sensing data, training experts in the region and disseminating satellite-derived products to all users. National civil society has been trained and motivated to work hand-in-hand with local communities, governments and the international community to educate and organize local groups to play an active role in forest and biodiversity conservation programs. Over five million hectares of logging concessions have been certified in compliance with international norms. The Central African Forests Commission (COMIFAC), was established in 2000 as a 10-country treaty organization to harmonize regional policies on forestry and biodiversity conservation. The Executive Secretariat includes a Climate Change Working Group with the objective of strengthening and unifying regional policies and approaches aimed toward sustainable landscape climate change mitigation measures. The international community has responded to the CBFP and the COMIFAC convergence plan by greatly increasing funding and technical support for forest and biodiversity conservation in the region.

Even though impressive progress toward the capacity to manage these tropical forests has been realized over the past eight years, substantial management and governance questions remain if these vast tropical forests are to be maintained as one of the globe's largest terrestrial carbon stocks and reservoir of the most spectacular and rare biodiversity on the planet. Thus, this RDCS offers the opportunity to build on these considerable assets to launch a vigorous new program as a springboard for the Global Climate Change Presidential Initiative in Sustainable Landscape management.

Regional and Country Context

The Central African countries tend to be politically centralized yet inefficiently administered and economically weak. Authority over forest management is often in the hands of a few powerful politicians and private sector actors. Until recently, civil society advocacy was weak or non-existent in many Central African countries, forest administrations ineffectual, understaffed and without the capacity to use modern technology such as information tools for forest management. These conditions are beginning to change, thanks in part to strong and consistent USG policy and capacity-building efforts over the past eight years. USG efforts have been strongly supported by intense interest in the conservation of the forests amongst the international community, initially inspired by the CBFP and more recently by the global threat posed by climate change.

With a sharpened strategic focus, USAID/CAR proposes that this RDCS (CARPE Phase III) restrict its program to the six principal forested countries of Central Africa: Cameroon, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon and the Republic of Congo and to continue support for the coordination of the Greater Virunga Landscape of DRC, Uganda and Rwanda. Chad, Burundi, Rwanda and Sao Tome Principe, though members of COMIFAC, do not contain significant dense humid tropical forest area and therefore are not proposed for Phase III. Although improving natural resources governance is an important strategy for sustainable development throughout the region, focusing on the six rainforest countries will allow the OU to concentrate its resources on similar problems, to support similar monitoring and evaluation systems, to apply standard scientific methods over similar forest resources and to maximize impact with the resources available to the program.

The six Central African countries with the majority of the dense humid tropical forest, while similar in ecology, manifest stark differences related to their colonial histories, post-colonial governance pathways, revenue sources, legal frameworks and institutional capacities. They all generally can be characterized as having poor economic governance, weak institutions, low human resource capability, underdeveloped civil societies, poor educational systems, low human health indicators and generally poor economic performance. Two of the countries (Equatorial Guinea and Gabon) are considered "middle income" countries based on per capita GDP from mainly petroleum-based extractive industries. Equatorial Guinea, however, has only recently exploited petroleum and is a relative newcomer to the middle-income ranks, whereas Gabon, despite 40 years of rising income has created strikingly little institutional capacity to manage its natural resource wealth until quite recently.

Most of these forested countries have suffered violent conflict and unstable governments since independence. All are at the low end of the World Bank's rankings for the ease of doing business and the Heritage Foundation's Index of Economic Freedom. They have been slowly "decapitalizing" for decades, as evidenced by deteriorated physical infrastructure, dilapidated educational facilities, worsening health conditions, capital flight, "brain drain" and rising corruption. The USG official presence is modest; the DRC the only country with a USAID mission. The USAID/DRC mission is focused on consolidating stability and recovery from a long period of misrule, war and continued violent conflict, particularly in the eastern regions. It is investing in social services such as basic education and public health as well as democratic governance, but it has only recently started programs in the economic growth area. The USG priorities in the five non-USAID presence countries are to improve governance, democracy and the rule of law. Improved natural resources governance is a very important subset of these priorities. Given that most of the regional wealth is derived from either extracting non-renewable resources such as minerals and petroleum or in "renewable resources" such as timber and hydroelectric power, governance is fundamentally a question of the equitable and transparent management of this wealth for both current and future generations. Ultimately economic growth and poverty alleviation are dependent on the effective and sustainable use and sound management of natural resources. Therefore, sustainable and sound natural resource management is requisite for creating the fundamental conditions for Central African sustainable economic development. In fact, environmental protection and climate change are USG priorities for the regional states, reflected by Gabon being

selected by the United States as the first African country to receive support for a Low Emissions Development Strategy (LEDS).

Table 1. Key Indicator Country Matrix

	CARPE Phase III	CARPE Phase II	CBFP	USAID Presence	GDP per capita[1]	Population in million. (Annual growth rate)	Corruption index (TI) rank of 178	Human Develop-ment Index of 169	Freedom House Index 2010 (1- 7)
Burundi		X	X		$160	8.3 (3%)	170	166	Partly free (4.5)
Cameroon	X	X	X		$1,136	19.5 (2.2%)	146	111	Not Free (6.0)
Central African Republic	X	X	X		$454	4.4 (1.9%)	154	159	Partly free (5.0)
Chad			X		$610	11.2 (2.6%)	171	163	Not Free (6.5)
Democratic Republic of the Congo	X	X	X	X	$160	66.0 (2.7%)	164	168	Not Free (6.0)
Equatorial Guinea	X	X	X		$15,397	0.7 (2.6%)	168	117	Not Free (7.0)
Gabon	X	X	X		$7,502	1.5 (1.8%)	110	93	Not Free[2] (5.5)
Republic of the Congo	X	X	X		$2,601	3.7 (1.9%)	154	126	Not Free (5.5)
Rwanda		X	X	X	$506	10.0 (2.8%)	66	152	Not Free (5.5)
Sao Tomé & Principe		X	X		$1,184	0.2 (1.6%)	101	127	Free

Against this bleak assessment of government and human capacity are some hopeful developments, some of which can be traced directly to USG efforts. Because natural resources play a dominant role in the lives of average Central African citizens, civil society has been emerging around the issues of natural resource conservation and the use of natural wealth for poverty alleviation and sustainable development. Thanks to the OU's consistent effort in building local capacity, the threshold has now been crossed for civil society to play a meaningful role with governments and the donor community alike in providing a voice for national and local decision-making. Growing civil society will provide an important platform for the implementation of the RDCS at regional, national and local levels.

[1] Data related to country GDP and population come from the World Bank website "www.worldbank.org".
[2] According to the U.S. embassy in Gabon, the 2010 Freedom House Index was based on a report done in 2008 and the Index is being updated to reflect the improvement that Gabon has achieved in recent years.

Since its launching in 2003, the OU has rapidly advanced regional and national conservation policies and approaches, especially through the establishment of management plans created through intensive participatory processes in and across 12 forest landscapes in seven countries. Forest conservation planning across multiple countries not only advances comprehensive regional conservation strategies, but also supports peace building and other cooperative efforts between and among Central Africa states. These vast forest landscapes were selected by the CBFP for their important biodiversity resources and relatively intact forest cover through a scientific and participatory process, but they also serve as fundamental livelihood sources for millions of local people. Furthermore, the landscapes sequester massive carbon stocks that if unprotected would be destroyed and degraded, releasing greenhouse gas emissions into the atmosphere, accelerating global climate change.

Because the legal system of most of the Central Africa states rests principally on Francophone colonial traditions, all forests, water, minerals – and, in fact, all natural resources – are the legal domain of the national governments. Weak state management of these resources creates a vacuum where local populations are often stripped of benefits as stronger or elite groups including private companies expropriate natural resources at sub-national and local levels. One of the major issues concerning resource access and land tenure is the disparity between modern legal systems and customary laws regarding land ownership. In general, traditional land rights are granted through inheritance, and are centered on communal access to resources; statutory laws encourage state and private ownership, with the emphasis on commercial production rather than on household production. Conflict arising from differences between customary and statutory law leads to disputes over access to resources and precipitates long-term negative impact on the environment which further negatively impacts the livelihood security of local communities resulting in even further cycles of environmental degradation. Weakening of traditional access via state control, migration and social change is evident in many communities, resulting in unsustainable harvesting of wildlife, rapid forest clearing for shifting agriculture, and weakening local community management of forest resources.

The international partnership approach pioneered by the CBFP has drawn important political support from Central African governments through COMIFAC and increased national attention to sustainable forest management. Effective, efficient and equitable forest management strategies will ultimately rely on a combination of national and regional policy frameworks that increase transparency and enable empowered participation of local communities and private actors. Independent monitoring systems are needed that can objectively verify and inform resource management decisions to obtain the ultimate long-term goal of sustainable environmental management, maintenance of important biodiversity resources, and the stabilization of greenhouse gas emissions emanating from forest destruction and degradation. The measures being proposed by the RDCS are highly integrated and comprehensive and build from the investment and successes of Phase I and II. They aim to deepen and institutionalize the sustainable management of the Central African tropical forest ecosystem with hands-on management of large-scale landscapes; reform policies, laws and regulations at both the national and regional level to support forest conservation; build capacity at all levels for generating and using evidence-based, scientific information for decision-making; and to design and implement supportive institutional

planning and management support systems. Executing such a complex strategy requires strong donor collaboration, the mobilization of a vast number of institutional actors from the region and beyond and long-term commitment and vision. The USG can only be successful in this effort through strong coordination with the increasing number of actors, an effort which must be reinforced with direct support from the U.S. embassies in the region.

Emerging Trends and Issues

Deforestation, forest degradation and the greenhouse gas emissions associated with these phenomena have been and remain strongly associated with demographic change in Central Africa. The general lack of economic alternatives for forest dwellers and the expected doubling of population in Central Africa over the next 20 years create great pressure to clear forests for swidden and commercial agriculture. Concurrently, growing urban populations that depend almost exclusively on carbonized wood for fuel exert strong pressures on natural forests as a source of domestic energy. Planning for these demographic and economic pressures at local, national and regional scales is essential to mitigate negative environmental impacts, particularly deforestation and biodiversity loss. Technological solutions are available for many of these forest land use challenges but are not well known or available to local communities. Many communities have been forced into unsustainable resource use patterns, given that their livelihood alternatives are limited in the face of economic collapse, poorly organized and uncompetitive agricultural markets, and the sheer isolation of large populations living in remote forest areas. These threats can be addressed through small-scale agricultural technological improvements, domestic fuel wood production as a short-to-medium-term energy substitute to natural forest biomass, community benefit-sharing from ecosystems services payments through the model of REDD+ being developed through the discussion of the UNFCCC and related actions.

A second category of "external threats" to the forest ecosystems of Central Africa is beginning to emerge. Global demand for food, fiber, minerals, petroleum and other natural resources is growing. Industrial logging has long resulted in serious negative environmental consequences when not appropriately managed. This threat is now being partially mitigated through market incentives and access as some importing countries are imposing stringent environmental and legal requirements on tropical timber. The European Union through the Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) and the United States through the Lacey Act, for example, require that tropical timber products imported into those countries be legally harvested. Forest certification is being widely introduced in Central Africa and the OU has worked in consortium with the national governments, COMIFAC and the CBFP members including the private sector to introduce industrial logging monitoring and tracking systems.

To date, large-scale conversion of tropical forests for agricultural purposes has not emerged in Central Africa as in the Amazon and Asia, though foreign investors are demonstrating a growing interest in palm oil and other industrial agriculture throughout the region. Among the first announced is a large oil-palm investment by an Asian company in Gabon. Given international economic conditions and the projected global food demand, it is likely that these pressures will mount over the next several years. Additionally, large mining and petroleum exploration have been announced recently in many of the

Central African countries. Several large foreign iron and diamond mining investments have been announced for the TRIDOM landscape, for example, in the area where the borders of Gabon, Republic of Congo and Cameroon meet. These are remote locations harboring some of the most spectacular endemic wildlife in Africa. The growing, large-scale investments of companies from China and other Asian countries, particularly in resource extraction, are an important emerging challenge for environmental protection. Given the paucity of market incentives to maintain environmental standards for products entering Asian markets, more vigorous enforcement and regulatory efforts will be needed than for western markets and companies.

While these large investments certainly are inherent potential threats to the forest and its biodiversity, public-private partnerships may play a mitigating role. For example, private investors accessing banks adhering to the Equator Principles (accessing capital from the 50 or so largest public and private investment banks in the world) have strong biodiversity obligations. Even for those investors not subject to Equator Principles, the OU may be able to influence their commitment to biodiversity conservation. These potentially positive biodiversity investments could either be business-oriented (to generate revenue for conservation); mitigation related; or supportive of corporate social responsibility (CSR) requirements. Several important international investors have designated reforestation, charcoal mitigation and biodiversity conservation as core environmental mitigation and obligations—but they lack expertise to carry out their commitments. CARPE implementing partners have assisted a number of logging and mining companies in the extractive resource zones in the landscapes to develop and implement plans for mitigating the threats to biodiversity. One of them is currently working with a large Swiss firm to establish biodiversity offsets for a proposed iron mine in the Bateke Plateau in the Republic of Congo. Given the governance challenges facing responsible private sector investors in the CARPE countries, a potential window for public-private partnerships appears to be an opportunity to further CARPE objectives as well as collaboration with USAID-supported Business and Biodiversity Offsets Program and perhaps other ongoing or emerging initiatives.

II. Program Goal and Development Objective

A. Overall Goal

The Goal Statement for this RDCS is: *"**Central Africa's transition to climate-resilient, low-emissions development accelerated through sustainable management of biodiverse forests**."*

This Goal supports the U.S. Government's priority in conserving the tropical forests and their biodiversity and the President's Global Climate Change Initiative in promoting sustainable landscape management to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD+). In addition to aligning with USAID Climate Change and Development Strategy, the Goal also supports the CBFP objectives to promote economic development, poverty alleviation, improved governance, and natural resources conservation in Central Africa. It responds to the growing global and national interest in REDD+ and the concerns over biodiversity loss in this region. Central Africa nations have strongly

shared USG objectives in climate change and conservation of forest and biodiversity. The DRC has emerged as a regional and international leader with its REDD+ program and has been selected as a pilot country for the World Bank's Forest Investment Program (FIP). All of the six forested Central African countries as well as the COMIFAC have announced their support for the REDD+ initiative and are in various stages of developing REDD+ Readiness Plans. Gabon is receiving USG's assistance to design a low emission development strategy (LEDS).

The Goal also supports the explicit commitment of the Central African countries to protect the Congo Basin's ecosystems as an integral component of the development process. The COMIFAC Convergence Plan is endorsed by all ten member countries and the broader CBFP membership, with the objectives of promoting the sustainable use of the Congo ecosystem in accordance with their social, economic, and environmental priorities. Central African Republic (CAR), the Republic of Congo (ROC) and Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) created the Sangha Tri-national trans-boundary forest complex. The ROC and DRC have signed a trans-boundary agreement the implementation which will reinforce the management of the largest RAMSAR site in the world. Uganda, Rwanda and DRC are ready to sign a Treaty for conserving biodiversity across the Greater Virunga Landscape. Equatorial Guinea and Gabon have issued decrees to ban export of raw logs. ROC, Cameroon and CAR have signed a Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) with EU for legal logging certification system. The ROC will host the summit of the heads of states of the Congo, Amazon and Borneo-Mekong Basins in Brazzaville in June 2011.

This Goal is measurable. Science-based methodologies and tools have been developed to measure the greenhouse gas emissions from the forest and the methodologies for surveys of keystone biodiversity species in CARPE landscapes have proven reliable.

B. Development Objective

The Operating Unit has specified only one development objective for this RDCS, ***"the ecological integrity of the humid forest ecosystem of the Congo Basin maintained."***

This Development Objective will be reached through the achievement of four Intermediate Results (IR): (1) Targeted forest landscapes sustainably managed; (2) Biodiversity threats in targeted forest landscapes mitigated; (3) Policy and regulatory environments supporting sustainable forest and biodiversity conservation established; and (4) Capacity to monitor forest cover change, greenhouse gas emissions and biodiversity strengthened.

Linking Development Objective to the Goal

The causal relationship between the Development Objective (DO) and the Goal is based on the following hypothesis: maintaining a healthy forest ecosystem through sustainable natural resource management stabilizes greenhouse gas emissions by reducing deforestation and forest degradation, thereby mitigating climate change, conserving biodiversity and enhancing ecosystems services and benefits such as improved livelihoods. The DO conservation and global climate change activities will

focus on 12 CBFP tropical forest landscapes located across six Central African countries. Policy development and monitoring systems will contribute directly to the achievement of the DO and ultimately to the Goal for the entire Congo Basin forested region. Major policy issues to be addressed will include: (1) harmonization the forestry policies in the region; (2) national and local policies for CBNRM, resource access rights, ownership and tenure of forests and their resources; and (3) integration of gender equality and indigenous people's rights in national and local policies. Constraints to the implementation or enforcement of the conservation policies and laws will also be addressed. The fact that the forests in the 12 targeted landscapes account for over 70 percent of the dense humid tropical forests in the Congo Basin directly links DO-level progress to Goal achievement.

Responding to identified challenges and opportunities

This DO directly responds to the opportunities created by the President's Global Climate Change Initiative Sustainable Landscape pillar. Promoting sustainable landscape management will reduce greenhouse gas emissions from avoided deforestation and reduced forest degradation and further sequester carbon from the atmosphere. International donors, including the United States, are committed through the UNFCCC process to support Central African countries to participate in REDD+ programs. The USAID/CAR program signifies strong support to this international process. The DO also takes advantage of the achievements of past CARPE investments in building regional, national and local capacity in land use planning, sustainable natural resource management, forest monitoring systems, the growth of capable local civil society and communities involved in conservation of natural resources, the improvement of the policy and regulatory environment, and the increasing political stability and security in the region.

The DO directly addresses a fundamental source of greenhouse gas emissions; deforestation and forest degradation, the major threats to the regional and global environment. The current deforestation and forest degradation in Central Africa is currently the result of unsustainable natural resource management practices at community level as opposed to other tropical forest regions where large-scale forest land conversion for commercial agriculture, logging, mining and alternative forest uses are advancing more rapidly. These external forces are expected to increasingly affect Central Africa over the next eight years.

Governments at all levels and local communities have multiple and serious capacity constraints that impede sustainable NRM. Weak institutional and human capacity combined with the still inadequate policy and regulatory frameworks also constrain effective involvement of local communities in forest management. Particularly severe policy constraints associated with the highly controversial question of land and natural resource "ownership", tenure and access rights were identified in the CARPE II External Evaluation. The landscape approach promoted through CARPE II and the national-level land use planning process are proving effective and efficient in addressing the principal driver of current deforestation. However, this land use management process also proactively establishes the enabling environment for addressing future "threats", including capacity building to address potential challenges of large-scale forest land conversions or by the changing mix of the deforestation drivers.

Deforestation and forest degradation also lead to a concomitant loss of biodiversity – species, genetic resources, and ecological processes and services – and proper NRM practices directly support their protection.[3] These biotic resources underpin Central African livelihoods of today and can contribute to the sustainable development of the region. Africa's important biological resources -- its crops, livestock, fisheries, wildlife and forests -- yield income, food, fiber, and fuel that the population needs, and provide the exports and jobs that are the bedrock for broad-based, equitable sustainable growth. For those living in the region, the most fundamental value of biodiversity is its integral role in the vitality and resiliency of the ecosystem upon which their livelihood depends. The rainforests of Central Africa form one of the planet's last great tropical wilderness areas with thousands of endemic plant and animal species and the world's largest populations of lowland gorillas, chimpanzees, bonobos (pygmy chimpanzees), and forest elephants. The loss of biodiversity would clearly threaten Central Africa's long-term development. In addition to deforestation and forest degradation, illegal hunting, commercial bushmeat trade and large-scale logging are major threats to biodiversity. CARPE III will support the mitigation of these threats through: (1) implementation of land use management plans for macro- and micro-zones, which include biodiversity conservation activities based on threat analyses; (2) promotion of sustainable community-based forest and wildlife management; and (3) strengthening the government capacity to monitor logging concessions and bushmeat trade and to enforce forest and wildlife laws.

The OU will address the identified weaknesses of Central African states' legal systems that hinder the implementation of sustainable NRM and the active participation of local communities in conservation by promoting legal and social systems that strengthen land and resource rights for rural peoples, improve national and regional governance and enhance political stability. Complementary activities build the capacity of civil society and communities to participate in natural resource decisions that affect their present and future livelihood opportunities. Comprehensive monitoring of forest and biodiversity resources will inform management and policy decisions. CARPE will actively promote the rights of women, indigenous peoples and other disadvantaged groups over natural resources in all program components. The program's regional nature requires strong coordination with a variety of stakeholders including individual U.S. embassies, national governments, the private sector, other donors, scientific and technical organizations and non-governmental organizations.

Deforestation, forest degradation and loss of biodiversity have a negative impact on the livelihood of millions of people living inside and outside the forests. Data obtained from GIS technologies and biodiversity surveys demonstrate that CARPE has significantly reduced the primary forest loss and either stabilized or increased keystone species in a majority of sites. Thus, without USAID investment, the rate of deforestation and loss of biodiversity in the Congo Basin will accelerate and exacerbate poverty and poor economic conditions in the region. The "development trajectory" may not be

[3] "Forest degradation" as defined by UN Convention on Biodiversity: "A degraded forest is a secondary forest that has lost, through human activities, the structure, function, species composition or productivity normally associated with a natural forest type expected on that site. Hence, a degraded forest delivers a reduced supply of goods and services from the given site and maintains only limited biological diversity. Biological diversity of degraded forests includes many non-tree components, which may dominate in the under-canopy vegetation."

immediately affected with respect to rates of economic growth, but the long-term economic viability of the region will be severely compromised with the degradation of the forest ecosystem.

The General Development Hypothesis

The development hypothesis for the RDCS posits that: (1) if sustainable and sound natural resource management stabilizes deforestation and forest degradation and mitigates threats to biodiversity in the targeted landscapes, the greenhouse gas emissions from the forests will be stabilized to conform to "reference scenarios," and "keystone" biodiversity species will be conserved in these landscapes; and (2) if CARPE succeeds in achieving the results envisaged through building sustainable landscape management capacity, an enabling policy and regulatory environment, systems for monitoring forests, GHG emissions and biodiversity, then the ecological integrity of the humid forest ecosystem of the Congo Basin will be maintained. In summary: increased capacity at the regional, national and local levels together with a strengthened enabling policy environment will lead to large scale greenhouse gas emission abatement, the conservation of biodiversity and the ability of regional countries to transition from environmental degradation and poverty to climate resiliency and low emissions.

Tropical deforestation worldwide is a major contributor to emissions of greenhouse gases, accounting for at least 15 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions according to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), and totals are higher if additional emissions from subsequent land use are counted. According to the UNFCCC, avoiding deforestation must play a central role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions, thereby mitigating global climate change. While deforestation and forest degradation in the Congo Basin cannot be completely arrested given already alarming demographic and technological trends in the region, effective forest management will substantially stabilize emissions of greenhouse gases from deforestation and degradation. Maintaining intact forests will also provide many other ecosystems benefits such as biodiversity habitat, non-timber forest products, tourism, water sources and economic opportunities for the burgeoning populations of Central Africa. Implementation of sustainable land use management plans that include biodiversity conservation activities and mitigation of threats to biodiversity will contribute to the maintenance of the ecological integrity of the humid forest ecosystem of the Congo Basin.

The principal means of achieving the Development Objective (DO) is to strengthen institutional and human capacity at the regional, national and local level. Institutions to monitor and manage the conservation and use of forest resources and to inventory, observe and report on greenhouse gas emissions will be strengthened, and specific policy and regulatory reform will be promoted to favor greenhouse gas emission reduction in conjunction with more intensive and direct ground-level conservation programs. These achievements will establish enabling conditions for the nationwide and regional adoption of sustainable landscape strategies for forest areas beyond the 12 targeted landscapes.

Technical Approach

The program under this Development Objective will employ the landscape management approach proven successful in CARPE II as underscored in the CARPE II Final Evaluation and formally endorsed by the CBFP and COMIFAC. This approach recognizes that the success of forest and biodiversity

conservation cannot rely on protected areas alone. It engages all of the key stakeholders in the spatial planning processes which lead to the consensual management of the landscape according to three general categories of "macro-zones" -- protected areas, extractive resource zones, and community-based natural resource management zones. These macro-zones are then managed to minimize deforestation, forest degradation and biodiversity loss consistent with local needs and national/regional priorities.[4] The planning guides developed by CARPE for each category of macro-zones will continue to be major tools for managing these vast areas of tropical forest.

CARPE will institutionalize these methodologies through training and technical assistance using a participatory approach to: (1) strengthen local, national and regional capacity in land use planning, forest management and biodiversity conservation at the landscape as well as macro-zone levels; (2) strengthen institutional capacity at the regional, national and local levels for natural resource monitoring and climate change mitigation; (3) improve the policy and regulatory environment, including enforcement through criminal prosecutions for natural resource management and climate change mitigation, and (4) improve local and national government capacity to use and institutionalize the information generated through CARPE for decision making.

The selection of the four intermediate results recognizes the major obstacles to the effective implementation of sustainable natural resource management, which when corrected will contribute to the achievement of the Development Objective. These obstacles are: (1) weak technical and organizational capacity; (2) lack or incomplete/inadequate legal framework or failure to implement policies/laws that create incentives to empower the communities to access and manage natural resources; (3) problems related to access rights, ownership and tenure of forests and their resources; (4) weak capacity of the judiciary systems to effectively regulate and enforce laws; and (5) lack of reliable information for decision making and resource monitoring.

Geographic Focus and Target Beneficiaries

This DO will focus on the 12 large tropical forest landscapes in the six forested Central African countries. These carbon-rich, biologically sensitive and diverse landscapes comprise more than 80 million hectares of critically important tropical forest in Central Africa (See Appendix 3 map). They have been selected on the basis of their international biodiversity value, the relatively rich carbon content of the forests, the large USG investment already made over the life of CARPE II in management planning with partner institutions (including the private sector), investments made in strengthening local community institutions, and through lessons learned in CARPE II (documented in the Final External Evaluation) of proven and cost-effective techniques and technologies that have the power to change behavior to less destructive environmental practices. These landscapes together comprise more than 70% of the total Congo Basin forest and therefore offer ample opportunity to achieve multiple objectives through sustainable landscape management. These areas are listed below.

[4] Detailed information on the CARPE Landscape Planning and Management approach and its effectiveness can be found on the CARPE website http://carpe.umd.edu/.

1. Monte Alen - Mont de Cristal Inselbergs Forest Landscape: *Mt. Seni and Mbé* (Gabon and Equatorial Guinea)
2. Gamba - Conkouati Forest Landscape: *Loango / Moukalaba-Doudou / Mayumba / Conkouati* (Gabon, Congo and Democratic Republic of Congo)
3. Lope - Chaillu - Louesse Forest Landscape*: Lope / Waka / Dimonika* (Gabon and Congo)
4. Dja - Minkebe - Odzala Tri-national Forest Landscape: *Boumba Bek - Nki / Minkebe / Mwangé / Ivindo / Odzala* (Cameroon, Congo and Gabon)
5. Sangha Tri-national Forest Landscape: *Dzanga Sangha / Nouabale Ndoki / Lobeke* (Cameroon, Congo and Central African Republic)
6. Lac Tele - Lac Tumba Swamp Forest Landscape*: Lac Tele / Lac Tumba* (Congo and Democratic Republic of Congo)
7. Bateke Plateau Forest Savanna Landscape*: Mpassa / Haute Ogoue* (Gabon and Congo)
8. Maringa / Lopori - Wamba Forest Landscape*: Maringa-Lopori / Wanba* (Democratic Republic of Congo)
9. Salonga - Lukenie - Sankuru Forest Landscape*: Salonga* (Democratic Republic of Congo)
10. Maiko - Lutunguru Tayna - Kahuzi Biega Forest Landscape*: Maiko / Kahuzi - Biega* (Democratic Republic of Congo)
11. Ituri - Epulu - Aru Forest Landscape*: Okapi* (Democratic Republic of Congo).
12. Greater Virunga Forest Landscape; *Virungas* (Democratic Republic of Congo, Uganda, Rwanda)

The program implemented under this strategy will benefit the people and the governments of the region. Direct beneficiaries include millions of people whose social and economic wellbeing depend on the forests in the Congo Basin. Special consideration will be given to women and indigenous people through methods and procedures described elsewhere in this RDCS. The government agencies and NGOs in the region will also benefit through actions that will strengthen their capacity in natural resource management, biodiversity conservation and climate change mitigation. Through its landscape approach and participatory land use planning process, the program will foster transnational cooperation and regional stability and security – both of which are critical factors for sustainable economic development. The program also benefits U.S. citizens and the global community through its impacts on global climate change and biodiversity conservation. The participatory approach practiced by CARPE draws on best practices associated with democracy, good governance and conflict mitigation/resolution. In the land use and management planning, democracy, governance and conflict issues are always taken into consideration.

Gender Integration

Progress has been made in addressing the gender issues under the current phase with the increased participation and integration of women in CARPE activities. The CARPE gender strategy entitled "Engendering CARPE" provides a type of "roadmap" for gender integration into all CARPE partner activities. The process actively fosters the participation of women in resource access and management decision making, which experience has demonstrated increases household well-being. COMIFAC has integrated gender equality in its Plan of Convergence. Last year, women accounted for over 30 percent

of the people trained by CARPE in natural resource management and many of them benefited from literacy training and alternative livelihood actions. Under Phase III, CARPE will expand its efforts in promoting gender equity through:

- Creating more opportunities and incentives for women to actively participate in capacity building activities and in managing community-based natural resources;
- Promoting policies that increase women's rights over to access to forest and wildlife resources, land tenure and property ownership;
- Facilitating women's access to alternative livelihood activities, especially women who are affected by the control of bushmeat markets and reduction of illegal hunting;
- Supporting women's organizations that are involved in conservation of natural resources and global climate change;
- Working with National REDD+ Committees to support adequate representation of women in REDD+ programs and to ensure that women have an equitable share of REDD+ benefits.

Data collected for indicators will be disaggregated by gender to the extent possible. USAID/CAR will conduct a formal gender review during 2012 and update the gender assessment accordingly.

Supporting Indigenous Populations

Approximately 500,000 semi-nomadic forest peoples (often referred to as Pygmies, comprising several clans and subgroups) live in the Central African rainforests. They are partially hunter-gatherers, live partially but not exclusively on the wild products of their environment and trade non-timber forest products such as bushmeat, honey and wild fruits with neighboring farmers in exchange for cultivated foods, especially starchy staple products such as manioc and other material items. Problems facing the Pygmies include discrimination by other ethnic groups, eviction from their traditional homeland due to deforestation caused by agricultural expansion and logging, and extreme poverty.

CARPE will actively support these indigenous people through the following efforts:

- Helping assure forest resource access through participatory and inclusive approaches to traditional forest resource management, including these disadvantaged groups specifically into the land use and management planning with other communities. Joint planning committees will monitor and mitigate the threats to and the needs of the local populations, with actions designed to address identified threats and needs. For example, representatives of local communities participate in the planning and implementation of the land use and management plans (participative zoning) and protected community forest areas are set aside for traditional hunting and gathering by the indigenous people.
- Helping indigenous people understand their rights and promote the respect for their rights by other ethnic groups through awareness-raising, training and advocacy.
- Supporting NGOs advocating for the rights of indigenous people such as REPALEAC (*Réseau des Populations Autochtones et Locales pour la gestion durable des Ecosystèmes Forestiers d'Afrique Centrale*)

- Working with National REDD+ Committees to support the rights of indigenous people to equitably share REDD+ benefits.
- Working with IUCN and local civil society organizations to advocate policy reforms in favor of the indigenous people, including traditional forest use rights.

CARPE III will redouble efforts to defend the rights of indigenous people and to conscientiously also support human rights of forest peoples more generally. Because CARPE partners support biodiversity law enforcement entities that employ lethal force, eco-guard training with respect to human rights, with appropriate attention to the rights of local people is an important element of the training curriculum. While the OU does not have sufficient resources and capacity to address all the human rights issues affecting these vulnerable populations, it will seek opportunities to collaborate with U.S. Embassies, the USAID/DRC Democracy & Governance office and others as needed to uphold these principles and concepts.

Informing Selection of the Development Objective

The selection of the DO is based on the findings and recommendations of the external evaluation of CARPE Phase II, the lessons learned from the implementation of the program and consultations through the interagency process. USAID/Washington, the U.S. Department of State, including the U.S. embassies in the affected countries, other federal agencies, and other stakeholders including American and international conservation NGOs, Central African public agencies and civil society, and other donors and international organizations, notably members of the CBFP have contributed to the substance of this RDCS. Additionally, it conforms to the draft USAID Global Climate Change strategy and the USG policy on REDD+.

The findings of the External Evaluation underscore that the landscape approach and landscape-level land use planning is one of CARPE's greatest achievements, bringing diverse stakeholders together to develop a common vision for their lands and a set of strategies and plans for their realization. The success of this approach has leveraged substantial additional financing from other donors, strengthened the management of protected areas, reduced illegal logging, and increased the area of humid forest under certified forest management plans. In addition, CARPE has succeeded in facilitating international agreements and establishing mechanisms for the collaborative management of trans-boundary landscapes and protected areas; contributed to a wide range of policy and regulatory reforms, developed effective remote-sensing-based forest cover change monitoring systems, and building conservation capacity. The evaluation recommended that CARPE be extended to 2020 to: (1) continue to focus on forest and biodiversity conservation systems with increased emphasis on implementing local sustainable NRM systems; (2) increase efforts on climate change mitigation by testing field-level systems to avoid deforestation, and building national and regional readiness and capacity to implement REDD+ programs; (3) assist in forest monitoring and modeling related to climate change; and (4) support reasonable allocation of forest carbon revenue that respects the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities.

Aid Effectiveness and Sustainable Local Capacity Building

The DO is strategically aligned with the vision and priorities of the Central African countries participating in the CBFP that support COMIFAC and its *Plan de Convergence*. In fact, USAID has worked with other development partners to support the transformation of COMIFAC into a self-reliant and functional institution capable of leading and coordinating the regional and international efforts for the sustainable management of the Congo Basin forest and its biological diversity. This evolving relationship between USAID and COMIFAC will be further strengthened under this DO through direct funding mechanisms responsive to the USAID initiative for procurement reform. Strengthening COMIFAC technical and management capacity will enable this institution to assume ownership and decision-making responsibilities over time. A strengthened COMIFAC will also serve to reinforce its mandate to coordinate member state policies. While USAID/CAR will work with COMIFAC to improve coordination of the policy and regulatory environment for sustainable natural resource management and biodiversity conservation, the OU will simultaneously support key national-level policy reforms, especially the establishment of legal frameworks for community-based natural resource management (CBNRM).

Strengthening local capacity is a principal strategy to achieve the DO. The small grants program implemented by IUCN under the current phase has strengthened the capacity of over 20 NGOs to advocate for policy reforms. Local NGOs have worked with American conservation organizations in the landscapes. This small grants program will continue under CARPE III to support NGO capacity building for policy reform advocacy. USAID will explore providing direct grants to local NGOs to further the goal of institutionalizing the program in the region. Support to national coordinators of COMIFAC as well as other public and private institutions will also be considered. In fact, there are many institutions and systems to address when all six countries and regional institutions are considered, including national parks services, ministries of environment, forestry authorities, provincial governments, and many more.

The OU will increase its support for the Central Africa Forest Satellite Observatory (OSFAC), a Kinshasa-based regional non-profit institution launched by the USG in 2000 with a specific mission to create satellite-derived products for forest cover change across Central Africa and make these products available to resource managers and decision-makers. OSFAC's services also include capacity building of the private sector, NGOs and regional governments in the subjects of satellite remote sensing, mapping, GIS applications and related geospatial products and applications. USAID will help transform OSFAC into an independent institution that is eligible for direct grants from the USG.

Working with Other Development Partners

The Congo Basin Forest Partnership has served as the principal platform for partner consultation and setting of regional conservation priorities. The USG through an interagency process continues to play a very strong role in guiding the partnership through a variety of mechanisms including annual CBFP plenary meetings, regional technical consultations and direct support to the ten "axes" of the COMIFAC Convergence Plan. The emergence of GCC Sustainable Landscapes priorities via REDD+ is drawing ever more attention and financial support to the region. The CARPE field delivery systems via the landscape program, strong implementing partners, the pioneering and scientifically validated CARPE

monitoring and evaluation systems and the tight USG interagency team work plays an outsized role in directing and leveraging these new resources. USG leadership through the CBFP and CARPE is creating the conditions to focus international effort on priority problems and needs in an exceptionally coordinated fashion. CARPE II has been successful in leveraging resources from other donors (European Union, World Bank, African Development Bank and bilaterals) and the private sector such as logging companies, and in attracting significant cost-sharing contributions from implementing partners.

CARPE III will expand efforts to promote, facilitate and realize public-private partnership in addition to continued leveraging resources from other donors and implementing partners. Extractive industries, especially those with international financing and the accompanying social corporate responsibility policies they require present good opportunities for partnerships. Already many logging companies are working with CARPE partners on wildlife management and community outreach. New opportunities to work with other private sector partners such as large-scale mining companies for both biodiversity and forest conservation are being explored. Evidence of this leverage includes:

1. Significant and substantial new donor funding mobilized from both traditional and non-traditional donors.
2. Increasing (though still wholly inadequate) national budget allocations to forest and biodiversity conservation.
3. Expanding and active membership in the CBFP (from original 33 members to now over 60).

In close cooperation with the region's governments, these donors and organizations are also supporting and/or implementing a number of programs and initiatives, including the:

- EU Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT).
- Central African World Heritage Forest Initiative multi-donor (CAWHFI)
- Conservation and Rational Use of Forest Ecosystems in Central Africa Program
- Regional Environmental Information Management Program (REIMP).
- REDD+ program and FIP (DRC).

Working with Other U.S agencies

The 2010 Quadrennial Diplomacy & Development Review (QDDR) recommends an integrated "whole of government approach." USAID/CAR has already been very proactive in integrating USG agencies into the program, but the QDDR policies provide the opportunity to increase interagency collaboration. Federal agencies such as NASA, USFS, USFWS, USDA and USGS are important implementing technical partners in the current Phase II of CARPE. This RDCS has benefited from extensive consultations with USAID/Washington, the Department of State, U.S. embassies in Central Africa, and many other federal agencies. The OU will tap additional interagency collaborators for Phase III such as:

- USFS: Forest management; landscape and land use planning; institutional capacity building for forest management at the regional and national levels.
- NASA, USGS: Remote sensing technology; GIS.

- USFWS: Capacity building for enforcement of forest and wildlife laws; surveys of keystone species; mitigation of hunting and trade of bushmeat.
- Department of Treasury: UN REDD+ including Forest Investment Program.

Specific scopes and mechanisms for enhanced interagency collaboration will be discussed between USAID and the concerned agencies. Other opportunities for collaboration include LEDS and SilvaCarbon Initiatives.

Recognizing the need for strong coordination with the U.S. embassies in the countries where CARPE III will be implemented, USAID/CAR envisions that embassy staff will actively assist the CARPE management team to coordinate and promote a national policy agenda through increasingly synergistic relationships between the national CARPE Focal Point and the key stakeholders group called the CARPE Country Team. USAID/CAR will develop a specific coordination plan with each of the regional U.S. embassies. The principal coordination mechanism will be through these respective Country Teams, where U.S. embassies can participate directly in establishing and promoting the national policy reform agenda.

Critical Assumptions

The OU will operate in a regional context in which factors both internal to the region and outside it will influence the OU's ability to achieve the goal, development objective, and the intermediate results described in this RDCS. Following are the risks associated with the strategy:

Risk: A lack of commitment of governments to climate change mitigation and forest conservation would impede the achievement of USAID/CAR's goal and objectives, particularly in realizing the institutionalization of the program. Currently, governments' commitment is steadily increasing as evidenced by their participation in a variety of forums and regional institutions such as the CBFP, COMIFAC and UNFCCC programs, especially REDD+. Section I analysis of the RDCS clearly identifies serious governance problems in most of the national governments. These weaknesses are systemic and continuing. However, the international attention to climate change and sustainable landscapes REDD+ mechanisms has forced a new level of transparency and openness in anticipation of considerable GCC revenue flows. These expectations are an opportunity to leverage more openness and further improved governance, especially in the forestry and conservation sectors. Unless political instability and violent conflicts reemerge, or the UNFCC process is seriously stalled, it is unlikely that the government commitment will diminish to REDD+. The OU therefore assumes that the Central African governments remain committed to climate change mitigation and biodiversity conservation and increased emphasis on forest conservation.

Risk: Violent conflicts may erupt in certain Central African countries leading to deterioration of stability and security. Such events would hinder the implementation of activities in the landscapes located in the affected areas. Mitigating measures are already in place such as the United Nations peacekeeping operation in the DRC (MONUSCO) , as well as ongoing support from USAID/DRC's Peace and Stability Program. Conflicts within landscapes do erupt in some regions as well, mainly with

groups vying for control of natural resources (such as the chronic conflicts in the Virunga landscape and more recently over fishing rights in the Lac Tele Tumba landscape in the DRC). The OU will monitor the stability of the countries and regions in which its works and continue to build in mechanisms that allow it to be resilient and effective despite conflict risks. The assumption for the RDCS is that regional and national stability and security will continue to improve. Pre-CARPE, CARPE I and II success indicates progress can be made in forest and biodiversity conservation, even in conflict situations.

Risk: The failure of the certain governments in the six targeted countries to comply with the international Global Climate Change (GCC) Agreements may lead to the suspension of international funding and technical assistance for the national REDD+ program and require the OU to reexamine its strategy and approach for the landscapes located in the country of concern. The OU currently does not foresee the occurrence of this scenario considering the growing interests of the COMIFAC member states in REDD+ and forest conservation. USAID/CAR will work with other donors to mitigate this risk. The OU assumes that the governments in the six selected countries and the United States will comply with international GCC Agreements.

Risk: Corruption at the national and subnational levels may lead to uncontrolled large-scale logging, mineral mining, and conversion of forested lands into commercial plantations, which will increase deforestation and adversely affect the achievement of the OU's goal and development objective. Pervasive corruption and mismanagement of public resources have occurred in many countries in Central Africa. It is likely that this problem can be mitigated or reduced because of the international safeguards established by the donors and to the interest of the governments to meet the REDD+ and other qualifying requirements. In addition, the empowered civil society that has benefited from CARPE's capacity building assistance should be able to advocate for transparent and participatory decision making processes. The OU will work with international donors, COMIFAC and NGOs to address corruption issues. Furthermore, CARPE will support public-private partnerships where they will favor management systems that will mitigate the adverse impacts of logging and mining on the environment. Regional U.S. embassies support these objectives through their political and diplomatic influence to promote public-private partnerships and address corruption and governance issues. The RDCS therefore assumes that the corruption in the region associated with natural resources exploitation will be controlled and reduced.

Risk: If forest-rich countries in Central Africa do not receive adequate financial support for forest conservation that they expect from the REDD+ program, they will be less engaged and less committed to the REDD+ program as well as other conservation programs. Currently, there is no indication that this scenario will take place. The OU will closely monitor the progress of the REDD+ programs. The assumption for the RDCS is that the international framework under the UNFCCC will emphasize financial support for forest conservation.

In summary, the following critical assumptions are put forward for this RDCS:

- Central African governments remain committed to climate change mitigation and increase emphasis on forest conservation;
- Regional and national stability and security continue to improve;
- Governments in the region are willing to participate in and comply with international GCC Agreements;
- Corruption will be contained and reduced;
- The international framework under the UNFCCC will emphasize financial support for forest conservation.

C. The Results Framework: Intermediate Results, Causal Logic, and Hypotheses

The achievement of the DO depends on four intermediate results that are highly integrated and mutually complementary. The continued ecological functioning of the tropical forest system will depend on the sustainable management of forest landscapes, which if successful will in turn reduce or stabilize deforestation and forest degradation Reduced deforestation and forest degradation will result in reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from forest destruction.

The conservation of biodiversity depends to a large extent on the mitigation of the threats to forest habitat and direct threats to biodiversity in the forested landscapes. The application of sustainable NRM practices through well-founded and sound NRM plans will mitigate biodiversity threats. However, mitigating biodiversity threats and improved NRM is not sufficient to achieve the DO.

The successful application of NRM plans and biodiversity conservation actions also requires a favorable policy and regulatory framework and the capacity of the governments and civil society at the regional, national and local levels to monitor the state of natural resources and the impacts of interventions on the environment to obtain timely and reliable information for decision-making. Government capacity at the national and local levels is also needed to enforce the laws in a transparent and consistent manner. Forest and biodiversity conservation will not be possible without local communities being empowered to play a strong role. To realize this potential, further legal and regulatory reform is required along with enormous capacity-building efforts, particularly around questions of resource access rights, ownership and tenure of forests and forest resources. Capacity building is also needed within law enforcement and the judiciary in order to achieve successful prosecutions where existing laws have been violated.

IR1 - Targeted forest landscapes sustainably managed: Past experience and lessons learned from CARPE showed that participatory land use planning that involves the design and implementation of management plans which define resource access and rights for each landscape as well as for protected areas, extractive resource zones, and community zones within each landscape is an effective approach that addresses the fundamental drivers of deforestation, forest degradation and loss of biodiversity. The implementation of sound management plans based on the participatory approach will increase the application of sustainable NRM practices across the landscape, leading to improvement and maintenance of the health of the landscape ecosystem. The recently released DRC Forest Cover Change Atlas provides compelling evidence that primary forest loss is substantially greater in non-CARPE

forested landscapes. Biodiversity survey data also suggest a significantly higher abundance of biodiversity keystone species in CARPE areas than in other areas, though causal linkages are not firmly established.

Local capacity for land use planning and management plan development at both landscape and macro-zone levels has been created and strengthened during Phase II of CARPE. A land use plan has been developed for each of the 12 landscapes and integrated management plans for many macro-zones have been established or are well advanced. Activities for IR1 of the DO will be built on the investments and the lessons learned from Phase II, with particular focus on the implementation of management plans. In addition, pilot activities related to REDD+ will be designed and implemented.

Illustrative Activities:

- Review and refine land use management plans for the 12 CBFP landscapes.
- Implement management plans for the macro-zones developed under Phase II.
- Develop and implement management plans for new land/seascapes and macro-zones if funds are available.
- Develop and implement business plans for macro-zones.
- Strengthen the capacity of local communities in planning and implementing land use and management plans.
- Strengthen the capacity of local communities to effectively participate in national REDD+ programs and support financing projects and programs e.g. "Fast Start" including the FIP.
- Design and implement pilot activities related to REDD+.
- Establish collaborative and synergistic relationships with national REDD+ and bilateral and regional programs supported by the USG.
- Establish public-private partnerships with logging and mining companies to develop and implement management plans to mitigate negative environmental impacts and to promote social investment.
- Build capacity of communities to equitably manage natural resources under their purview.
- Develop and implement strategies to allow adequate representation and active participation of women and indigenous people in the planning and implementation of activities.

The following indicators will be used to measure the achievement of IR1:

1.1. Surface area of biologically significant tropical forest landscape with improved management plans implemented to minimum standards.
1.2. Number and type of different use-zones categories within individual landscapes implementing management plans.
1.3. Number of climate mitigation tools, technologies and methodologies developed, tested and/or adopted as a result of USG assistance.
1.4. Number of men and woman trained in sustainable forest landscape management and global climate change as a result of USG assistance.

IR2 – Biodiversity threats in targeted forest landscapes mitigated: The tropical forests of Central Africa are home to over 400 species of mammals, around 1,000 species of birds, and more than 10,000 species of plants, about 3,000 of which are endemic to the region. In addition to deforestation and forest degradation causing loss of habitat, hunting, commercial bushmeat trade and large-scale logging are major threats to biodiversity in targeted landscapes. A study published in an edition of Conservation Biology ties the presence of roads to bushmeat hunting in the Congo Basin. According to this study, the roads and associated hunting pressure reduced the abundance of a number of mammal species including duikers, forest elephants, buffalo, red river hogs, lowland gorillas, and carnivores; and even moderate hunting pressure can significantly affect the structure of mammal communities. During the current Phase, CARPE's implementing partners have developed scientifically designed methodologies to conduct biodiversity surveys in the landscapes. In addition, each management plan at both landscape and macrozone level incorporates a threats monitoring system and allows for adaptive management to address emerging or changing threats. The findings of the surveys and the continuous threats monitoring systems will be used for the design and implementation of biodiversity conservation activities during CARPE III.

CARPE III will mitigate these threats through: (1) land use management plans for macro- and micro-zones, which include biodiversity conservation activities based on threat analyses; (2) promoting sustainable community-based forest and wildlife management; and (3) strengthening government capacity to monitor logging concessions and bushmeat trade and to enforce forest and wildlife laws.

Illustrative Activities:

- Assist local communities to develop and implement land use and resource management plans including biodiversity conservation activities, especially the management of community forests.
- Promote a trans-boundary approach to landscape and protected area planning and management.
- Provide technical assistance and training to enhance sustainable management of protected areas.
- Provide technical assistance and training to logging and mining company staff to develop and implement management plans that mitigate the threats to biodiversity through public-private partnerships.
- Build and strengthen capacity within law enforcement and the judiciary in order to achieve successful prosecutions where existing laws have been violated.
- Conduct bushmeat market chain studies to identify threats to biodiversity and undertake actions to mitigate the identified threats.
- Improve participation of women and indigenous populations in wildlife management and strengthen their rights to natural resources and lands.
- Expand alternative livelihood opportunities for rural communities, with particular attention to the potential economic impacts on women affected by controlling the bushmeat market.
- Build capacity to conduct wildlife surveys to monitor the population status of biodiversity indicator species.

- Coordinate with other donors, civil society organizations and resource-extraction companies to introduce environmental impact planning of infrastructure such as roads to mitigate the adverse impact on biodiversity.

The following indicators will be used to monitor the achievement of IR2:

2.1. Number of land use management plans for macro- and micro-zones including biodiversity conservation activities based on threat analyses.

2.2. Number of arrests and prosecutions by law enforcement for illegal hunting and bushmeat marketing.

2.3. Number of men and women receiving USG- supported training in biodiversity conservation.

The landscape and macro-zone management plans will incorporate a continuous threats monitoring system and then allow work plans to be revised under the USAID adaptive management policy.

IR3 – <u>Policy and regulatory framework supporting sustainable forest and biodiversity conservation</u>: Experience in natural resource management in Africa as well as in other parts of the world demonstrates that the success of sustainable natural resource management programs depends to a large extent on the establishment and effective implementation of policy and regulatory frameworks. USAID/CAR through the international public organization IUCN is working with the governments and civil society in the region to improve natural resource governance and establish a regulatory environment favorable to sustainable NRM.

The OU's consistent effort to strengthen civil society around resource use, improved governance and advocacy themes to improve policy and regulatory environments has awakened and created a safe space for national and regional debates over forest resources in particular and increasingly over the rational development of mineral and petroleum resources. While still nascent, this is a growing movement that has already substantially impacted government policies and actions in countries where, heretofore, civil society was completely suppressed (such as in Equatorial Guinea, Gabon and the Republic of Congo). Cameroon and the DRC have enjoyed more active civil societies for longer than the other regional states, but, nevertheless, civil society has had little capacity until recently to play a role in national debates. Despite such encouraging progress, more efforts are needed to address the important policy and legal issues that affect the implementation of sustainable NRM projects and large-scale REDD+ activity, particularly those concerned with Forest Code, Land Tenure Code and the legal framework for the active participation of local communities in natural resource conservation and in REDD+ activities such as "benefit sharing."

USAID/CAR will increase its efforts to further strengthen the capacity of civil society to participate in making decisions and to advocate for the improvement of policies and regulations at the national and local level and for the transparent and fair sharing of benefits from natural resource management among affected stakeholders including indigenous people.

<u>Illustrative Activities</u>:

- Identify and prioritize regional and national issues concerning policies and regulations critical for achieving the DO and develop an action plan to address these issues.
- Work with government and civil society to establish favorable legal frameworks for CBNRM (e.g. resource ownership, tenure and access.)
- Work with REDD+ national committee, NGOs and the government to develop appropriate policies and regulations regarding the participation of local communities in the REDD+ program including benefit sharing.
- Strengthen the capacity of local communities to participate in decision making for conserving natural resources and implementing REDD+ activity and to monitor the implementation of laws and regulations to ensure good governance.
- Support the development and implementation of low-emission development strategies.
- Work with relevant civil society to advocate for the rights of women and indigenous people in managing natural resources.
- Support COMIFAC's Convergence Plan in the regional policy and regulatory environment concerning greenhouse gas emission reduction, forests and biodiversity conservation.

The following indicators will be used to measure the achievement of IR3:

3.1. Number of policies, laws or regulations promoting natural resource management and conservation that are implemented as a result of USG assistance.

3.2. Number of laws, policies, agreements, and regulations addressing REDD+ proposed, adopted, or implemented as a result of USG assistance.

3.3. Number of judiciary officials (men and women) receiving USG-supported training in prosecution of violators of laws pertaining to forest and biodiversity conservation.

IR4 - Capacity increased and strengthened at regional, national and local level to monitor forest cover change, greenhouse gas emissions and biodiversity: Timely and reliable information on the outcomes and impacts of environmental activities is essential for planning, adaptive management and decision making. A strong capacity at the regional, national and local levels to monitor forest cover change, biodiversity indicator species and greenhouse gas emissions from the forests in the Congo Basin will enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of efforts to achieve the development objective. The results of the monitoring and assessment will inform implementers as well as other stakeholders whether their activities are on the right track or whether changes are needed. CARPE has developed reliable tools and methodologies based on modern technologies and scientific knowledge to monitor forest cover change, logging concessions and keystone biodiversity species. CARPE has also worked on a methodology to measure greenhouse gas emissions from deforestation in the landscapes. Under this RDCS, USAID will provide technical assistance and training to institutionalize this knowledge and to increase local competencies. USAID will also assist host countries to develop and implement MRV systems for forest-based greenhouse gas emissions.

USAID will seek opportunities to create synergistic relationships between CARPE and regional U.S. embassy programs such as the International Visitor Program and the Humphrey Fellowship Program to develop human and institutional capacity at the national and local level.

Illustrative Activities:

- Conduct an assessment of the training needs for government and NGO staff and develop regional, national and local training plans.
- Train relevant government agencies and NGOs at the regional, national and local levels in the application of monitoring methodologies and tools.
- Transform the Kinshasa-based regional Remote Sensing and GIS NGO (OSFAC) into an independent, self-reliant institution.
- Assist COMIFAC in preparation and publication of "State of the Forests" and other Reports
- Train national and local institutions in conducting large-scale keystone biodiversity species population abundance and distribution surveys.
- Train government institutions to develop and implement MRV systems for forest-based greenhouse gas emissions.
- Collaborate with regional U.S. embassies to select candidates for the International Visitor and Humphrey Fellowship programs.

The following indicators will be used to measure the achievement of IR4:

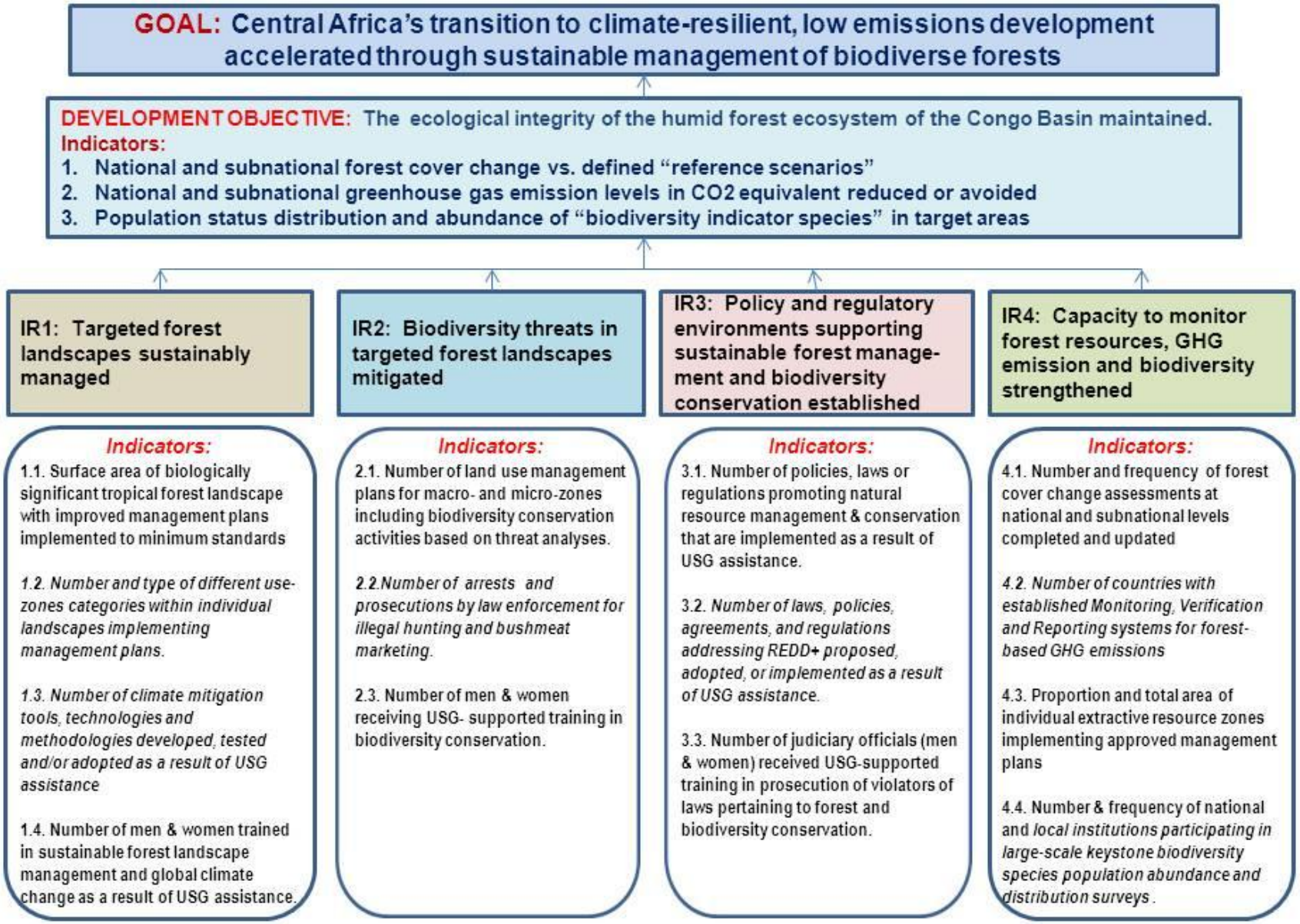
4.1. Number and frequency of forest cover change assessments at national and subnational levels completed and updated.

4.2. Number of countries with established Monitoring, Verification and Reporting systems for forest-based GHG emissions.

4.3. Proportion and total area of individual extractive resource zones implementing approved management plans.

4.4. Number and frequency of national and local institutions participating in large-scale keystone biodiversity species population abundance and distribution surveys.

USAID/Central Africa RESULTS FRAMEWORK



III. Monitoring and Evaluation

Existing Monitoring and Evaluation System

Monitoring of program results and performance is a substantial challenge for CARPE given the vast and remote areas where program activities take place, the large number of countries supported, the small management team and the relatively large number of implementing activities. These conditions have prompted CARPE to create monitoring systems which generate data that can be aggregated and summarized across the entire program with specific, objectively verifiable long-term and annual performance targets and benchmarks. This system has produced a wealth of information and reports, which are archived according to defined geographic zones (primarily the three macro-zone types in the landscapes), and on thematic subjects, all referenced and searchable on the CARPE web site "CARPE Mapper" and "CARPE Data Explorer" as well as the "CARPE Information Management Tool" sections. This system has proven quite effective in tracking the progress of the development of approximately 160 land use plans, but less satisfying in monitoring meaningful policy reform, capacity-building efforts and governance changes.

An unusual feature of the existing PMP, and to be continued in the new Phase in a slightly modified form, is that one IR (IR-4) outcome in itself monitors certain biophysical changes in the forest and its biodiversity as the output to various capacity building efforts. Therefore, not only is the capacity building in IR-4 an important end result in and of itself, this IR is also designed to help produce measurements of the outcome at the DO level at the same time. Approximately 25% of total OU resources are expected to be dedicated to creating capacity in resource monitoring, but the products and results from those resources will also directly inform program achievement as well.

The existing M&E model for measuring the area of tropical forest under improved management primarily tracks the steps achieved and data collection efforts in a pre-established process for designing management plans. The OU will build on this model to track progress in implementing plans and the physical changes that result from implementation of management plans on forest cover and biodiversity indicators. Therefore, the internal system will evolve from producing and assembling social and biological data and information, designing management plans and building planning capacity at regional, national and local levels to the more intense work of assisting the responsible entities in implementing and modifying these plans through the adaptive management paradigm that is both "best practice" and the policy of USAID.

Another area for which the OU has systematically developed monitoring systems is the commercial logging industry in all six forested countries. Baseline "Forest Atlases" have been produced in cooperation with five of the six regional countries as of 2011, and the Equatorial Guinea Forest Atlas is expected to be produced by the end of 2012. In their initial versions, the atlases provide basic information about each concession, determine whether it is operating in its legal limits and provide additional information about the companies and their logging practices. This basic information is then built upon annually to add data related to the implementation of the concession management plans, and

potentially information such as tree species cut, volume, and taxes paid. One additional area that the OU will examine is the feasibility of adding an element of carbon stock monitoring in logging concessions. Some trials have already been conducted and various carbon inventory biomass analyses are under way in several countries. Adding mining concession mapping and monitoring to the Forest Atlas is also being tried in Gabon and the DRC, and this feature will be added as resources and government interests allow in future Forest Atlases.

Hundreds of documents, organized around the PMP and the land use planning processes are posted on the CARPE web site, largely in a geographic interface that allows the public to follow CARPE progress according to the forest landscape planning steps of the IR-1 via the "Information Management Tool." The CARPE web site has proven a popular method for information sharing among the international conservation community, government and scientific stakeholders, the CARPE management team and program implementing partners alike. The OU monitors the web site usage quarterly through the Google Analytics dashboard to understand the relative popularity of various features and sections and according to the country origin of visitors, their geographical region, language preference and the specific pages viewed in both English and French languages. The site content is then adjusted to improve communication with these users.

Baselines for keystone biodiversity indicators species such as forest elephants and the various species of great apes have been completed in critical portions of all of the targeted landscapes. This monitoring is costly, requiring large teams of field biologists to work for months in extremely remote locations collecting field data. However, there is not any substitute for statistical field survey work and the keystone species monitoring is strategically included in each of the 160 management plans according to need. The baseline information is then used to measure abundance and distribution over time through subsequent field surveys and management plans are subsequently adjusted to address emerging and changing threats. This system will be further refined and strategically deployed across landscapes and individual management units over planned time horizons, and individual site surveys sequentially planned to optimize information collection not only locally, but regionally given what are clearly very limited human and financial resources for the task. Finally, the biannual "State of the Forest Report" is a joint monitoring effort of the CBFP partners to help coordinate their work, agree and report on common indicators and help organize our outcomes around the COMIFAC Convergence Plan. In addition to data on the biophysical condition of the forest, the report also presents special thematic areas of interest and their application for conservation objectives such as REDD+, carbon stock management, bushmeat conditions, logging, fuel wood, status of protected areas and many other subjects through prior consultation of the CBFP partners. The actual conservation practitioners produce the articles which are peer reviewed by an international scientific and technical committee. This report series, including three volumes with one in press, is now on the desks of all Central African managers and decision-makers. It is the principal reference cited on matters concerning the state of the Congo Basin forests.

Toward a New Performance Management System

The PMP: The Phase III Performance Management System will be structured around the new Results Framework (RF). A detailed PMP with all required components will be developed. A Tracking PMP Table using the template presented at the end of the M&E section will be used for the M&E process.

Baselines and Targets: As mentioned above, baselines for targeted landscapes were completed for DO indicators 1 and 3 as well as for IR-1, IR-2 and IR-4 during CARPE Phase II. These baseline data are available in CARPE II's annual reports and website. The GHG emissions will be estimated and calculated through the forest cover change atlas methodology to establish the baseline for DO indicator 2. Additional work will be done in year one to establish the baseline for IR-3. The setting of the targets for the indicators at the DO and IR levels will be based on the approved scope and funding level for the RDCS and based on the achievements of CARPE II. The baselines of two indicators are listed in the table below.

Indicator	Baseline
IR-1.2: Number and type of different use-zones categories within individual landscapes implementing management plans.	Protected Area: 34; CBNRM: 66; ERZ: 43 for all 12 landscapes
IR-4.3: Proportion and total area of individual extractive resource zones implementing approved management plans.	5 million hectares of certified logging concessions

Methodologies and Approaches for Data Collection and Performance Monitoring: The methodologies and tools for data collection and performance tracking are briefly mentioned in the section above, "Existing Monitoring and Evaluation System." More in-depth discussions on these issues are presented in this section. The five boxes illustrate the opportunity/evaluation questions and the indicators for the DO and IRs. Performance management will continue to be a strong emphasis under Phase 3 as described in this RDCS. While the focus of this RF and DO remains the achievement of biophysical outcomes, it is also important that USAID/CAR builds capacity in African institutions for the monitoring and maintenance of these outcomes, including the ability to develop, use and adapt the tools and methodologies for achieving these outcomes, so that they may continue after the conclusion of CARPE Phase III. The RF specifies indicators that measure the DO achievement and emphasize the strengthening of local capacity as a means toward institutionalization of the program. The results under IR-4 "Capacity to monitor forest resources, GHG emissions and biodiversity strengthened" will actually produce a substantial amount of the data required for assessing progress toward achieving the indicators for the DO. As cited above, the OU has already invested heavily in M&E systems in order to assess and manage the program. The extensive baseline information and measurement systems will allow program performance to be evaluated in terms of physical changes, but further, the development hypotheses can also be examined through achievement at both the IR and DO levels. The DO Indicator 1 "National and

subnational forest cover change vs. "reference scenarios" will be tracked through the activities under IR-4, particularly the national forest atlases being produced via a remote sensing methodology. The forest cover change atlases permit forest cover change from 1990-2000-2010 (according to three classes of forest types: primary, secondary degraded and woody savannah) to be measured as a baseline with annual updates possible. The forest cover atlas allows forest cover change measurement against any "reference scenario" that may be adopted for any specified national or subnational geographic area. The GHG emissions can also be estimated and calculated through the forest cover change atlas methodology. It is expected that forest atlases will be completed for at least three countries by the end of 2012 with others completed over time. For those cloudy countries such as Equatorial Guinea and Gabon, additional remote sensing technologies using radar will need to be accessed as discussed elsewhere in the RDCS. The biodiversity keystone species distribution and abundance will be assessed according to the standard CARPE survey methods already published and peer reviewed in scientific journals. Phase III will organize biodiversity monitoring systematically across the 12 CBFP landscapes which will supplement the monitoring programs at individual macro-zone level.

High-level indicators and evaluation questions

Development Objective: **The ecological integrity of the humid forest ecosystem of the Congo Basin maintained**

Evaluation questions:

1. Does sustainable and sound natural resource management stabilize deforestation and forest degradation and mitigate threats to biodiversity in the targeted landscapes? If so, are greenhouse gas emissions from the forests stabilized in conformity with "reference scenarios," and are "keystone" biodiversity species conserved in these landscapes?
2. Has CARPE succeeded in achieving the results envisaged through building sustainable landscape management capacity, an enabling policy and regulatory environment, systems for monitoring forests, GHG emissions and biodiversity?
3. If greenhouse gas emissions from the forests have been stabilized in conformity with "reference scenarios," and if "keystone" biodiversity species have been conserved in these landscapes, and if CARPE has succeeded in achieving the results envisaged through building sustainable landscape management capacity, an enabling policy and regulatory environment, systems for monitoring forests, GHG emissions and biodiversity, THEN has the ecological integrity of the humid forest ecosystem of the Congo Basin been maintained?
4. Have increased capacity at the regional, national and local levels in association with a strengthened enabling policy environment led to large scale greenhouse gas emission abatement, the conservation of biodiversity and the ability of regional countries to transition from environmental degradation and poverty to one of climate resiliency and low emissions?
5. To what extent does the program achieve its development objective as measured by DO's performance indicators?
6. Are there significant differences in result achievement among the managed landscapes? Why?
7. What are the lessons learned from this program?

Indicators to monitor changes in regional and national context

1. Transparency International Corruption Perception Index
2. Regional and national stability and security (U.S. embassies/State Department)
3. International investment in logging and mining sectors (Forest Atlases, World Bank, government ministries)

Performance Indicators:

1. National and subnational forest cover change vs. defined "reference scenarios"
2. National and subnational greenhouse gas emission levels in CO2 equivalent reduced or avoided
3. Population status distribution and abundance of "biodiversity indicator species" in target areas

The methodology for forest cover change monitoring using satellite imagery and the algorithms for processing voluminous satellite remote sensing data to create mosaic satellite maps have been published

in scientific journals including "Remote Sensing and the Environment." The landscape planning methods have been reported in other journals such as "Science." The COMIFAC is validating the four Planning Guides (Landscape-wide planning, Extractive Resource Zones, Protected Areas and Community Based Natural Resource Zones) for deployment and application in all ten COMIFAC-member countries. Several Ph.D. dissertations have been produced through the CARPE program in remote sensing, geography and biological subjects. The monitoring methods that CARPE will use, therefore, are well developed and scientifically tested.

IR-level indicators and evaluation questions

IR-1: **Target Forest landscapes sustainably managed**

Evaluation questions:

1. Does a managed landscape have a slower rate of forest cover loss than a non-managed landscape?
2. What are the major constraints to successful implementation of NRM plans?

Performance Indicators:

1. Surface area of biologically significant tropical forest landscape with improved management plans implemented to minimum standards.
2. Number and type of different use-zones categories within individual landscapes implementing management plans.
3. Number of climate mitigation tools, technologies and methodologies developed, tested and/or adopted as a result of USG assistance.
4. Number of men and woman trained in sustainable forest landscape management and global climate change as a result of USG assistance.

Now that the monitoring tools are tested and available and a flow of quality data is assured, the DO-level indicators will be available to periodically assess and redeploy USAID resources to those geographic areas and IRs, institutions and implementing mechanisms that are either more successful or where new threats are defined that pose greater obstacles to achieving the DO results, or both. For example, a working hypothesis for IRs 1 and 2 is that by creating alternative local livelihoods that are less environmentally destructive, incentives can be created and local behavioral changes can be made that in aggregate will lead to achievement of the IR and in turn the DO. Initial analysis of deforestation rates in some macro-zones supports this hypothesis; with new data, this hypothesis should be periodically and rigorously tested. The cost of these incentives related to the impact on forest cover can be used to estimate the cost of avoided deforestation, presented in tons of CO2 equivalent, for example. These findings will inform not just CARPE implementation, but will be useful for all Central Africa REDD+ implementation programs.

IR-level indicators and evaluation questions

IR-2: **Biodiversity threats in targeted forest landscapes mitigated**

Evaluation questions:

1. How effective is the integration of biodiversity conservation into the land use management plans in mitigating threats to biodiversity?
2. Does improvement of law enforcement and prosecution significantly reduce the loss of keystone species?

Performance Indicators:

1. Number of land use management plans for macro- and micro-zones including biodiversity conservation activities based on threat analyses.
2. Number of arrests and prosecutions by law enforcement for illegal hunting and bushmeat marketing.
3. Number of men and women receiving USG- supported training in biodiversity conservation.

Another example is the hypothesis that improved law enforcement and prosecution will mitigate threats to keystone biodiversity must be tested along with the keystone species population data. Constant review of data will be needed to reaffirm the causal development hypotheses as outlined and implicit in the RF.

Meaningful measurement of improved governance of natural resources (IR-3: Policy and regulatory environments supporting sustainable forest management and biodiversity established) has been more problematic than the objective measures of land use

planning progress, forest cover change, logging concession legality, and even gross estimates of "GHG not-emitted." Currently, the OU tracks the advocacy efforts of local civil society, the number of new policies, regulations and laws created and related press reports on environmental enforcement activities. While interesting information is gained through this process, the OU proposes a much more targeted indicator series for governance that will more proactively identify those policies that are deemed by the stakeholders in need of change, and then target OU resources to those reforms more systematically. The individual "Country Teams" will be tasked with monitoring these indicators. While the capacity and governance related indicators of the RF are binary in nature (either a person is trained or is not trained, a law is passed or it is not passed), the OU recognizes the desire and usefulness of incorporating process level measurements into our PMP. Cost permitting, this might include a questionnaire-based measurement to determine the percentage of individuals trained who have applied the learning from that specific training.

IR-level indicators and evaluation questions

IR-3: **Policy and regulatory environments supporting sustainable forest management and biodiversity conservation established**

Evaluation questions:

1. How effective and efficient is the NGOs' advocacy for improving policy and regulatory environment?
2. What are major constraints to improving the governance of the forest sector?
3. Is the program effective in supporting the rights of women and indigenous people in NRM?

Performance Indicators:

1. Number of policies, laws or regulations promoting natural resource management and conservation that are implemented as a result of USG assistance.
2. Number of laws, policies, agreements, and regulations addressing REDD+ proposed, adopted, or implemented as a result of USG assistance.
3. Number of judiciary officials (men and women) who received USG-supported training in prosecution of violators of laws pertaining to forest and biodiversity conservation.

IR-2 has been established in the RDCS results framework to more explicitly diagnose and respond to threats to biodiversity at the landscape level. The existing landscape planning and implementation methodology as described in the CARPE Planning Guides sets forth the principles on the threats monitoring approach. The IR-2 adds support for law enforcement and judicial strengthening to address environmental crimes. New implementing mechanisms will be needed to fully achieve these results.

IR-level indicators and evaluation questions

IR-4: **Capacity to monitor forest resources, GHG emission and biodiversity strengthened**

Evaluation questions:

1. How effective are the capacity-building activities?
2. What are the lessons learned in capacity building?

Performance Indicators:

1. Number and frequency of forest cover change assessments at national and subnational levels completed and updated.
2. Number of countries with established Monitoring, Verification and Reporting systems for forest-based GHG emissions.
3. Proportion and total area of individual extractive resource zones implementing approved management plans.

The cross-cutting theme of building capacity will be more strategically developed and measured through a set of monitoring tools. The capacity development in Phase II was driven more by landscape-level requirements and implementing partner needs assessment than through deliberate national or regional strategic needs assessment. Supporting past capacity building efforts has been a massive informal and formal training program, under which over 40,000 people were trained over the 2003-2011 period. Recipients have included national parliaments, national Ministries of

Forestry and Environment, local governments, the COMIFAC Executive Secretariat, and village organizations – all of whom have been targets of the OU's capacity and institution-building efforts.

All four of the IRs now include indicators for measuring institutional capacity. Therefore, during the 2012-2020 RDCS period, capacity building plans will be calibrated to impact those institutions, organizations and individuals that will have a direct role in achieving IR results. A capacity-building plan will be designed for each country and implementing mechanism for each of the four IRs. While capacity-building is expected to remain a broad effort given that human capacity remains at such a low base in the region, targeted support to those institutions that will be directly implicated in GHG inventories, forest policy and that are identified as drivers of deforestation will have the highest priority for scarce training funding. The products of institutions such as GCC MRV systems, national forest inventories, forest concession mapping and the State of the Forest Report will still serve as important indicators of regional capacity, as will the production and implementation of simple management plans by local communities, for example. National and provincial ministries of environment, national parks management institutions, ministries of tourism and forestry are the principal government agencies that will be targeted for targeted capacity building.

Impact Evaluation

USAID has recently issued a new evaluation policy with implications for CARPE. Even though the OU has cultivated a strong ethic of performance management and building systems to measure annual and time-phased results achievement, periodic external impact evaluations are important for a variety of important management reasons and are now required as well by the new USAID evaluation policy. The biophysical impacts of the program can be directly observed via surveys and forest change mapping. Biophysical information will be regularly collected, analyzed and reported annually as described above. In addition, a formal impact assessment will be conducted to document the relationship of the OU program and its impact on the regional Development Objective in year 5 of this period (FY 2017). The impact evaluation will also serve as an opportunity to verify the development hypotheses, causal linkages and the linkages of the program costs relevant to the magnitude of achievements.

This impact evaluation will provide an opportunity for USAID to determine whether CARPE impacts are cost effective and are trending in the direction expected. The baseline data collected in Phase II, supplemented with data from Phase III and data that may be available from independent sources will lay the foundation for this aspect of the impact evaluation. Assessing impact on governance and capacity will require new investments by the OU in measurement systems and baselines. It is important for the OU to establish a quantitative baseline for a large number of institutions related to forest governance and institutional capacity in year-one if planned impact assessment will be meaningful. This measurement is complicated by the large number of institutions in six countries that must be strengthened to attain the DO, including government agencies, civil society and law-making bodies. Proxy indicators and indirect measurements employing social science methodologies will be the principal means of measuring institutional capacity performance and impact. This baseline work will be the responsibility of the individual Country Teams with support from the CARPE management team.

USAID / CENTRAL AFRICA REGIONAL
PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT PLAN (PMP)
FOR THE CENTRAL AFRICA REGIONAL PROGRAM FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

Development Objective: The ecological integrity of the humid forest ecosystem of the Congo Basin maintained

Indicator	Indicator Definition and Unit of Measure	Data Source	Method of Data Collection or Data Distribution	Data Acquisition, Analysis and Reporting by Mission Date/Frequency / Responsible		Actual Result vs Target		
						Year	Target	Actual
Indicator #1 National and subnational forest cover change.						2011 (Base) 2012 2013 2014 2015 2016 2017		

Intermediate Result 1: Target forest landscapes sustainably managed

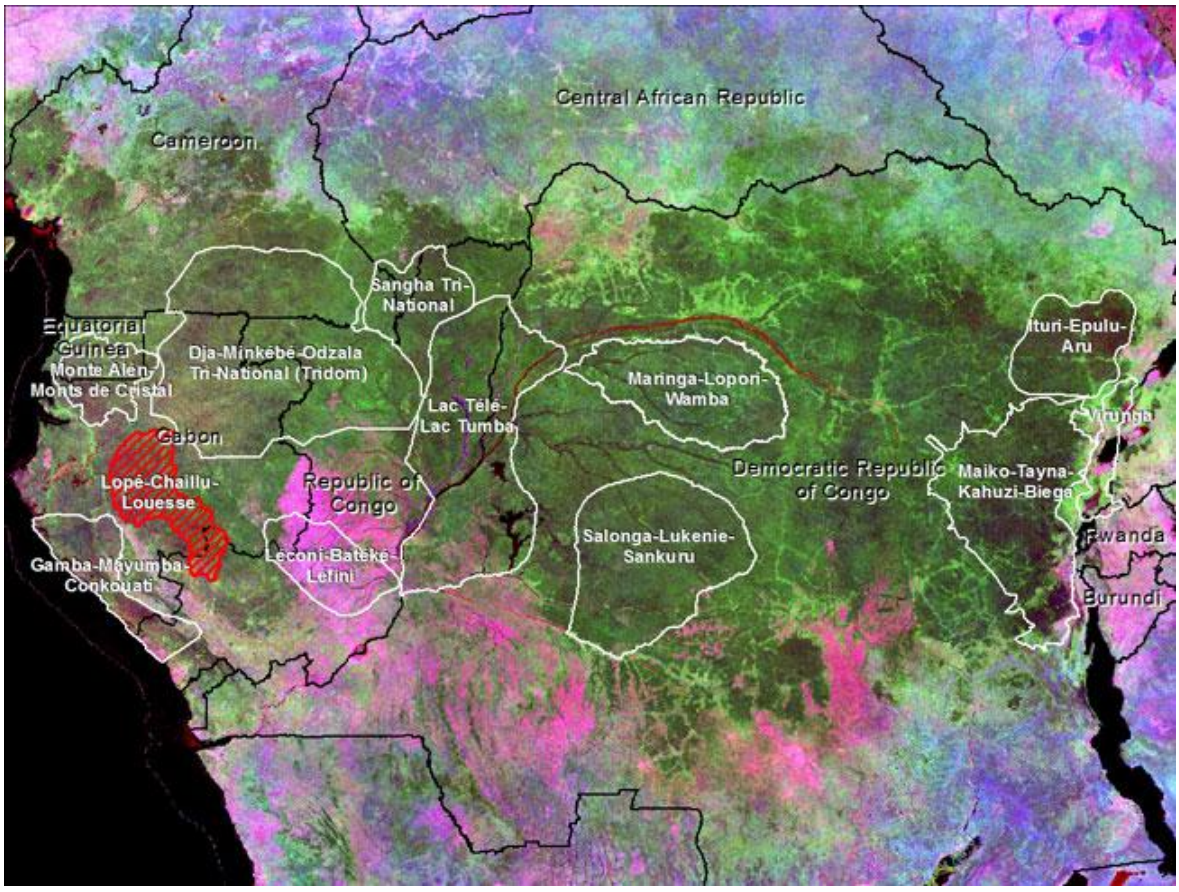
Indicator	Indicator Definition and Unit of Measure	Data Source	Method of Data Collection or Data Distribution	Data Acquisition, Analysis and Reporting by Mission Date/Frequency / Responsible		Actual Result vs Target		
						Year	Target	Actual
Indicator #1.1 Surface area of biologically significant tropical forest landscape with improved management plans implemented.						2011 (Base) 2012 2013 2014 2015 2016 2017		

IV. USAID FORWARD

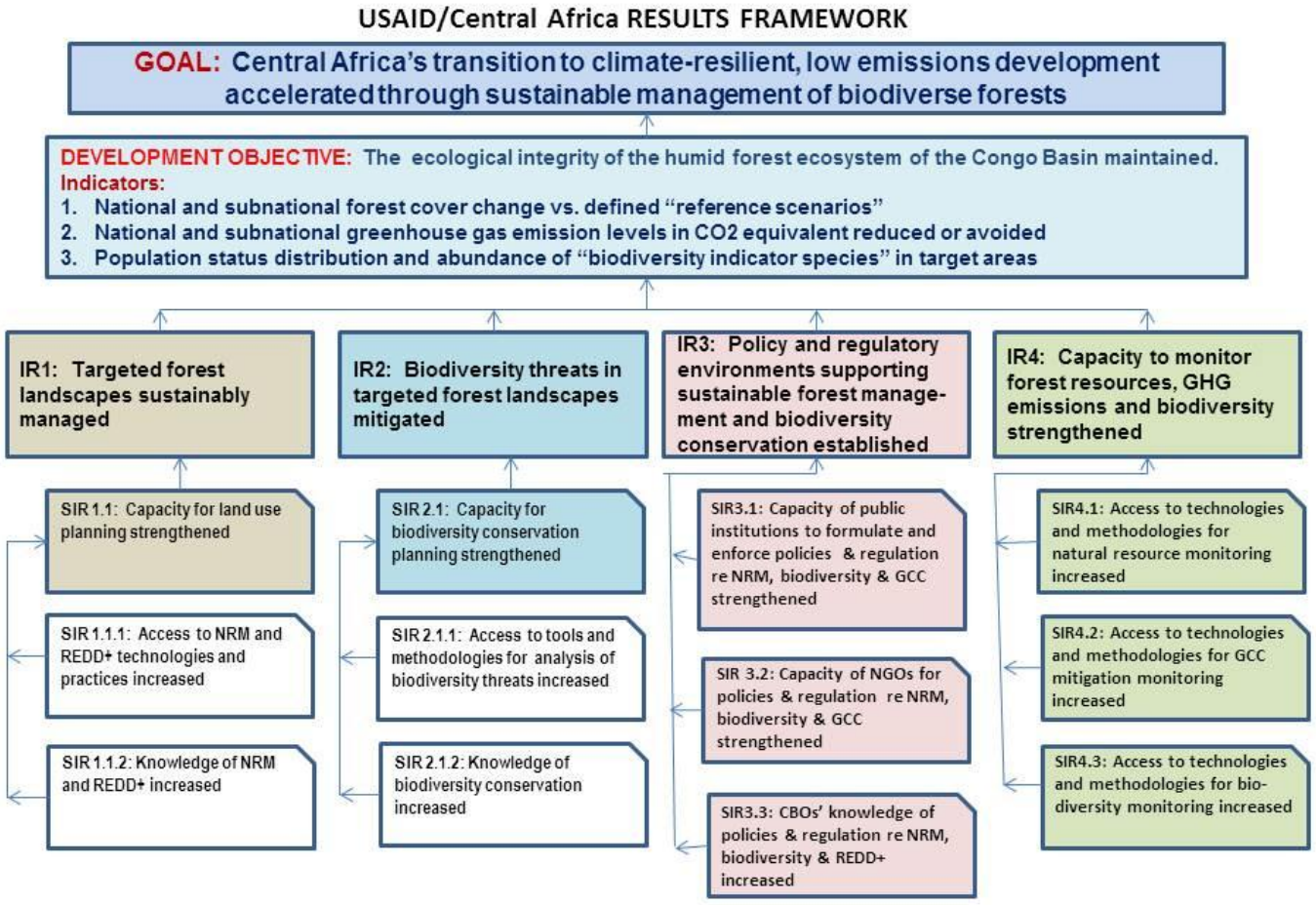
This RDCS will incorporate several reforms included in USAID FORWARD agenda which are summarized below.

- Implementation and Procurement Reform: In addition to the American and international conservation organizations, Public International Organizations, and U.S. Federal agency implementing partners, USAID/CAR will make a great effort to provide direct grants to local NGOs or not-for-profit institutions. Two potential candidates are COMIFAC and OSFAC.
- Talent Management: USAID/CAR has been able to attract a group of dedicated and competent staff from different cultural and professional backgrounds whose valuable contributions to the success of the program were cited in the CARPE II External Evaluation Report. USAID/CAR has also offered and will continue to offer opportunities for international interns and AAAS Overseas Fellows to gain knowledge and field experience.
- Strengthening Monitoring and Evaluation: USAID/CAR has developed rigorous and transparent systems to monitor the performance of its partners and the outcomes and impacts of implemented activities across all the landscapes and program activities. State-of-the art technologies (remote sensing, GIS, etc.) and science-based methodologies have been developed and used to measure forest cover change, deforestation and to survey keystone species. The new USAID evaluation policy will further strengthen the OU commitment to employing a wide variety of science-based tools and methods for program, project and activity-level evaluation.
- Science and Technology: In collaboration with NASA, the University of Maryland and South Dakota State University, USAID/CAR has employed advanced technologies such as remote sensing, GIS, mapping, and analysis of satellite data for program planning and monitoring. Special attention will be given to the development of technologies and methodologies for the estimation of forest biomass and calculation of greenhouse gas emissions. USAID/CAR has also collaborated with the University of Kinshasa whose researchers work with OSFAC in remote sensing and mapping. The OU will explore the scope of further implicating local students and their professors in linkages with American Universities and faculties in science capacity-building strategies. Graduate-level training in conjunction with U.S. academic partners is already ongoing at a limited scale, and there are opportunities to expand formal linkages. Other U.S. agencies already working in the region such as the Smithsonian Institution's Gabon program can be better integrated in Gabon. Other American Academic institutions such as the UCLA Tropical Research Center may also be a resource for collaborative hands-on training of Central African researchers.
- Innovation: The external evaluation report cited CARPE's landscape approach as an innovation in natural resource management. Other innovations of CARPE include the land use planning approach, the development of the transparent and rigorous M&E system, and the three features -- CARPE Information Management Tool, CARPE Data Explorer and CARPE Mapper – on the CARPE website.

Appendix 1: Congo Basin Forest Partnership Large-Scale Forest Management Landscape



Appendix 2: Detailed Results Framework



Appendix 3: Resource Documents

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